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Spectrolab to Supply Solar Cells to German Satellite Builder Dornier

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SYLMAR, Calif., May 2, 2000 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Spectrolab, Inc. will supply its state-of-the-art solar cells to Dornier Satellitensysteme GmbH (DSS) of Germany for qualification testing in DSS' space solar array systems, under a technical assistance agreement between the two companies.

This is the first European agreement for Spectrolab since it received U.S. government approval recently to provide solar cells, panels, and arrays to major European spacecraft manufacturers. It enables the procurement of several hundred thousand multi-junction solar cells by DSS through 2002, as well as the formulation of related proprietary agreements with DSS that allow for direct insertion of the multi-junction solar cell into existing designs.

Once qualified, Spectrolab's multi-junction gallium-arsenide solar cells can improve DSS' solar array power performance by 40 percent as compared with earlier designs using silicon cells. This significant performance boost supports spacecraft designs requiring 20 kilowatts or more.

These multi-junction space solar cells have an average efficiency 24.5 percent, and have been qualified by the major U.S. satellite manufacturers. Spectrolab has delivered more than 35 kilowatts of these high-efficiency devices to numerous flight programs for both commercial and U.S. government applications. These next-generation cells reaching 27 percent efficiencies have been delivered for three U.S. flight programs. The first is scheduled to launch in late summer 2000.

For the European market, the availability of Spectrolab's flight-proven, multi-junction gallium arsenide solar cells is an enabling factor in the race toward higher revenue-generating spacecraft. The use of more efficient solar cells makes it possible to increase the power on existing satellite models and reduce time to market of today's satellite designs. The added efficiency also makes it possible to have either a lighter, smaller array of equivalent power or a more powerful array with

no increase in size or weight. Improved efficiency means a reduction in launch and on-orbit operational costs.

Spectrolab has delivered more than 665 kilowatts of single- and multi-junction gallium arsenide solar cells to flight programs, with 160 kilowatts currently operating on 39 spacecraft. Spectrolab is currently working under a jointly funded development contract with the U.S. Air Force to deliver 35 percent efficiency space solar cells by 2002.

DSS, a DaimlerChrysler Aerospace company, has been supplying satellites and satellite subsystems to the space industry since 1969. This includes more than 300 solar arrays for various European government and worldwide telecommunications applications. DSS is positioned to join the anticipated Astrium Company with Matra Marconi Systems this year.

Spectrolab has been supplying solar cells and arrays to the space industry since 1958. It has boosted its solar cell production capacity to deliver nearly 1 megawatt of power per year to global spacecraft manufacturers, and has reduced the cycle time required to transfer new designs into flight production by nearly 50 percent.

Spectrolab is headquartered in Sylmar, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles. It also is a leading supplier of Nightsun(tm) searchlights and solar simulators. Visit Spectrolab's website at www.spectrolab.com. Hughes Electronics Corporation acquired Spectrolab in 1975. The earnings of Hughes Electronics, a unit of General Motors Corporation, are used to calculate the earnings per share attributable to the General Motors Class H common stock (NYSE:GMH).

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